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Diabetes Associations Honor Hammerstrom
*Senator Recognized As Long Time Supporter of Diabetes and
Kidney Health Care*

March 27, 2003-Senator Beverly Hammerstrom (R-Temperance) was presented with the “Friend of Diabetes and Health Care” award for her positive contributions to policy issues related to diabetes and kidney disease on Wednesday. The National Kidney Foundation of Michigan, Inc., along with the Michigan Diabetes Outreach Network and the American Diabetes Association honored legislators for their work with the organizations and their commitment to educating others on the disease.

“Senator Hammerstrom has been a long-time friend of the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan,” says Sally Joy of the organization. “I wish there were more legislators like Senator Hammerstrom who understood the wisdom of investing in prevention. I appreciate her very much,” Joy said.

Senator Hammerstrom sponsored a bill in 2000 which requires health insurers, HMOs and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan to cover diabetic educational training, drug treatments and supplies. The legislation was approved in the Michigan Senate and House of Representatives in December 2000 and was signed into law January 9, 2001. The law is known as the “Diabetes Cost Reduction Act.”

“I am honored that the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan chose to give me this award,” said Senator Hammerstrom. “It’s important to educate people on the preventive approach to treating diabetes,” Hammerstrom said. “If left untreated, diabetes can lead to many serious conditions, and the best way for people to avoid further complications is to educate themselves on the proper maintenance of the disease,” said Senator Hammerstrom.

Diabetes can lead to a number of serious health complications including blindness, kidney disease, heart disease, stroke and amputation. However, the American Diabetes Association reports that diabetics can reduce the risk of developing further health complications by 50% to 76% with proper treatment and education.

A picture of Senator Hammerstrom receiving the award is available on the photowire at www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/hammerstrom/index.htm.